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East Northamptonshire Council Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan response form

This form may be photocopied or downloaded from the website. Further printed copies can also be obtained from the Council. **Please return by 4.30pm on Monday, 17 August 2015.**

This form can be returned by e-mail to planningpolicy@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk or by post to Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan Consultation, East Northamptonshire Council, Freepost NH 2352, Thrapston, Northamptonshire NN14 4BR. **Email is the Council's preferred method of receiving comments, as it will help us to handle your representation quickly and efficiently.**

Comments are invited, regarding whether the draft Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documentation fulfil the "**basic conditions**", as required by paragraph 8 (1) (a) (2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Localism Act 2011). If you wish to make comments about the draft Neighbourhood Plan, please specify which of the five "basic conditions" you are commenting on (see Q1, overleaf). Comments should set out a justification as to why you consider that the basic condition has **not** been met, or why you consider that the basic condition has satisfactorily been met.

All comments will be forwarded on to the appointed examiner for the Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan. You should not assume that there will be an opportunity to add further information, although the examiner may request additional information from you, based on the matters he/ she identifies for examination.

The regulations require that any representations made during the consultation period for the Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan must be submitted to the examiner together with a summary of the main issues raised. Therefore, comments cannot be treated as confidential. They will be attributed to source and made available as public documents, although personal addresses will not be made publicly available.

East Northamptonshire Council will consider all representations made if returned by the deadline. However, please note that late representations cannot be accepted.

Personal Details		Agents Details (if applicable)	
<i>Organisation Name:</i>	Duchy of Lancaster	<i>Organisation Name:</i>	
<i>Contact Name:</i>	Neil Hall	<i>Contact Name:</i>	
<i>Address:</i>	1 Lancaster Place Strand London WC2E 7ED	<i>Address:</i>	
<i>Tel:</i>		<i>Tel:</i>	
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<i>E-mail:</i>		<i>E-mail:</i>	

Q1 Five “basic conditions” form the statutory requirements for the draft Neighbourhood Plan. These require that the Neighbourhood Plan:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Has regard to national policy and guidance from the Secretary of State; | X |
| 2. Contributes to sustainable development; | X |
| 3. Is in general conformity with the strategic policy of the development plan for the area or any part of that area; | X |
| 4. Doesn't breach or is otherwise compatible with EU obligations – this includes the SEA Directive of 2001/42/EC; and that | |
| 5. The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species regulations 2010(d), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects | |

[Please tick the relevant basic condition and submit a separate form for each of the basic conditions you are commenting on]

Q2 Why do you consider that the draft Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan and/ or supporting documents do/ do not meet the specified “basic condition”?

Please provide a brief summary of your comments.

The Duchy supports the general thrust of what appears to be a well-considered and positively prepared draft plan. Having significant land interests in the area we welcome the opportunity to comment on the emerging policies and to consider how our land might help the Town meet its growth needs.

Duchy ownership includes a significant estate east of the A6 from Chown Mills in the north to land forming part of Rushden East in the south (HF.H3). It also includes site HF.H4 East of Ferrers School. The Duchy supports the allocation of these sites in the Plan and is willing to work with the Council to bring them forward.

Having carefully reviewed the document we would make the following comments as to how the plan could be made more effective and to meet the basic conditions. These relate to section 4.1 Development Policies and are set out below.

Detailed explanation

Please give further details of your opinion and the reasons for it (continue on a separate sheet as necessary).

Proposed Changes to HF.H2 – Type of Dwelling

Residential development proposals above 10 dwellings will be required to provide for a mix of housing types ~~ensuring a minimum of of which about 50% will be being~~ smaller homes (1 & 2 bed properties including for instance single storey dwellings), suitable as starter homes for young families or as homes for the elderly. Housing mix should also provide for homes suitable for the disabled.

Alternative housing mix provision may be appropriate but would need to be justified by an up to date local needs assessment, viability appraisal or masterplanning and design considerations.

Explanation:

Added flexibility and clarity is required to enable the most suitable solution to come forward and respond to viability issues. In particular, achieving the best site design might result in a slightly modified dwelling mix. Adding flexibility and design as a consideration makes it clear that this will be a key factor in any proposals and also reflects the importance placed on it in other plan policies e.g. HF. DE1.

HF. H3 – Higham East (Future Growth)

Comments:

This policy, and the supporting text on page 23, is supported as being in conformity with strategic policies set out in the emerging Joint Core Strategy. The land is a suitable and sustainable area for future growth which received strong support in consultation feedback. It allows proper long term masterplanning linked to proposals at Rushden East. The area indicated falls within the Duchy's Estate.

Proposed changes to HF.H4 – Land East of Ferrers School

Provision is made for 11.75 ha of land to the east of Higham Ferrers School for the development of approximately ~~up to~~ 300 houses accessed from John Clark Way Roundabout. The

development will be permitted providing the following criteria are met:

- provision of affordable housing in line with policies elsewhere in the Development Plan unless supported by a viability assessment;
- provision of formal and informal open space, Sustainable Urban Drainage systems and landscape buffer and screening between the development and Higham Business Park and the Ferrers School; ~~with any measures to reduce potential impact on the SPA/Ramsar site;~~
- safe-guarding and enhancement to the Public Right of Way (UK2) linking John Clark Way Roundabout to Queensway and contribute to the extension of the Greenway through to William Steele Way and the Town Centre and providing additional alternative walking and jogging routes for new residents;
- the submitted application facilitates provision of a secondary vehicle access for Ferrers School if required and improved pedestrian and cycleway connectivity to the school;
- design considerations and connections within the site enable ~~contribution towards the future~~ provision of a safe and high quality link across the A6 ~~between this site and future~~ by development at Higham East;

Explanation:

The Duchy supports the allocation of this site and can confirm that the land is suitable and deliverable.

The above amendments to the policy are suggested for the following reasons:

Policy HF.H2 seeks to deliver 50% of homes as 1 and 2 bedroom units. Having a limit of 300 homes may therefore fail to make best use of the site given the large proportion of smaller homes now being sought. Inserting the word 'approximately' instead of 'up to' provides flexibility for the best design solution to emerge at the applications stage and through engagement with the Town Council.

Second bullet: delete reference to SPA/RAMSAR as covered in final bullet.

Fifth bullet: Change to make it clear that the actual link across the A6 is a requirement of Higham East rather than this site. The wording makes it clear, however, that land East of Ferrers School will need to enable this link to be achieved through the internal design and layout of the site.

Q3 The appointed examiner will consider all representations received by the deadline (**4:30pm, Monday 17 August 2015**). Normally, the examiner will seek to consider all responses through written representations. However, occasionally an examiner may consider it necessary to hold hearing sessions to discuss particular issues.

I would like to request to be heard before the examiner at the Neighbourhood Plan Examination [If you have indicated that you wish to attend the Examination, please explain why you consider this to be necessary. Please note that this is entirely at the discretion of the examiner]:

Q4 Please indicate whether you wish to be notified of either or both of the following:

(ii) The publication of the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Plan Examiner

(iii) Final "making" (adoption) of the Neighbourhood Plan by East Northamptonshire Council

If you have ticked any of the above options, please make sure you have provided an email address to help us reduce postal costs.

Signature:
Neil Hall
Duchy of Lancaster

Date: 18 August 2015

Thank you for taking the time to respond.